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### **Mock Arctic Case Scenario-Spring 2012**

In search of future economic revenues, Russia has turned great attention to the exploitation of its Arctic's resources.

Looking at the reserve base in the Chukchi, the Russian company Rosneft decides to drill exploratory wells 12.5 nautical miles from US territorial waters. According to UNLCOS every coastal state has complete sovereignty over 12 nautical miles and exclusive rights to the next 200 nautical miles (unless you can prove that your outer-continental shelf extends beyond 200 nautical miles).

According to very conservative estimates by the US Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the waters off Alaska's coasts (which includes the 200 nautical miles Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) zone) holds up to 20 billion barrels of oil and 132 trillion cubic feet of natural gas..

Russia, having completed their submission to UNCLOS to delineate the borders between Russia and the United States determined from research studies that this area, which they argue is 12.5 nautical miles, is within the jurisdiction of the Russian EEZ. Their studies indicate that the Russian outer continental shelf (OCS) extends all the way up to 12.5 miles from US coast.

This results in a flurry of denunciations by US politicians and calls by both conservatives and liberals alike for the US to sign on to the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The United States, having not signed onto UNCLOS, does not legally have the international right to defend what it perceives as its own EEZ and outer continental shelf.

While US political conservatives accuse Russia of playing aggressive politics, Russia in fact, is operating in accordance to international law – specifically through its membership to the UNCLOS treaty.

### **Regional Responses to the situation:**

Russia's announcement to drill exploratory wells heightens debate in the US as well as Canada and the rest of the Arctic community as to how and where to develop oil and gas in Arctic waters and the impacts that this might engender.

- The US continues to denounce Russian activities in the press and in Congress;
- Russia defends its actions as allowable under international law and castigates the US for not signing the UNCLOS Treaty;
- Canada, understanding that Russian O&G activities in the Chukchi can impact Canadian waters calls an emergency meeting with Denmark and lobbies Denmark to agree to take the issue to the Arctic Council. Their aim is to get the rest of the Arctic Council members to create a binding set of rules and standards dealing with Arctic Extractive Industries.



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### **Task for participants of the Mock session:**

Based on the existing studies and recommendations of the Arctic Council on Arctic oil and gas issues, you the participating members, will debate whether or not a binding set of rules and standards for Arctic Extractive Industries should be passed.

This includes determining what rules and standards must be passed and will also be the subject of debate. Therefore, Denmark and Canada must work together before the Mock Session and arrive at the Mock session with a Joint Resolution on a binding set of rules and regulations that they will present to the rest of the Arctic Council members.

The Mock session debate will begin with Canada and Denmark making a joint statement of their resolution. They will appoint one person to provide a 15 minute presentation on their Resolution.

The rest of the members will need to know their state's or organization's position point-by-point as this will be followed by a 30 minute breakout session in which each member state or participant will either have to side with Denmark and Canada or create a coalition against them. You must also lobby Denmark and Canada to make sure that the resolution benefits your country or organization. If you cannot get Denmark and Canada to agree with you then you must put forward a new resolution and lobby for others to agree with your new resolution.

At the end of this time we will open the floor for discussion. Each person wishing to talk will have 5 minutes to make their case. At the end of all presentations we will open the floor for two minutes rebuttals. At the end of this we will have a 15 minute break to do last minute lobbying. We will then reconvene the meeting for a vote.

Following the meeting there will be a press conference on the announced decision.

### **Important links and information to this session**

<http://www.modelarcticcouncil.org/getting-ready/background-guides/>

<http://www.modelarcticcouncil.org/uncategorized/protection-of-the-marine-engaged-for-change/>